



Date: November 3, 2015

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager

Through: W. Bowman “Bo” Ferguson, Deputy City Manager

From: Rhonda B. Parker, Director, Parks and Recreation

Subject: Priority Trails for a Healthy, Well-Connected Durham

Executive Summary

In June 2015, City Council approved funding for an assessment of Durham’s priority trails as identified by the City and Durham Open Space and Trails Commission (DOST) with the purpose of determining specific costs to design and build these trails. The assessment, in the form of a pamphlet, presents a graphic and written guide to each of the five priority trails and includes a feasible route, connection opportunities, demographic analyses, and design and construction costs based on NCDOT 2015 standards. The assessment was completed in October, and it should be a useful tool that will benefit trail planning and funding in the future.

Recommendation

The Administration recommends that City Council receive the “Priority Trails for A Healthy Well Connected Durham” pamphlet.

Background

Trails in Durham provide residents with opportunities for transportation, recreation, and wellness, and strengthen connections within and between neighborhoods. Expanding and improving Durham’s trail system will provide these opportunities and connections to a greater number of residents and can play an integral role in achieving goals of the City’s Strategic Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and Trails and Greenways Master Plan.

Goal 3 of the City’s Strategic Plan adopted in 2013 is Thriving, Livable Neighborhoods - “strengthen the foundation, enhance the value, and improve the quality and sustainability of neighborhoods.” An expanded trail system will help make this goal a reality in neighborhoods throughout Durham.

Goal 1 of the Trails and Greenways Master Plan updated in 2011 is Connectivity: “Plan trails and greenways with origins and destinations, to link residential areas with schools, parks, institutions, and shopping. Tie into the City’s and County’s systems of sidewalks, on-road bicycle routes, and transit to allow citizens a choice in their recreation and work commuting, and be consistent with adopted bicycle and pedestrian facility plans. The Durham network will connect with regional, state, and national trail systems wherever possible.”

Recommendations of the 2013-2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan are rooted in three key concepts: Connectivity, Sustainability, and Optimizing Current Facilities and Programs. An improved and expanded trail system ranks a high priority of this plan.

It is with these goals and key concepts in mind that the Durham Open Space and Trails Commission (DOST) and the City of Durham identified five priority trails that, when built, will have the greatest and most beneficial impact on residents where they live, work, and play in Durham.

The five priority trails are: Pearisontown Trail, Bryant Bridge North/ Goose Creek West Trail, Sandy Creek Trail, North Ellerbee Creek Trail, and Third Fork Creek Trail.

Attachments

“Priority Trails for A Healthy Well Connected Durham” pamphlet